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# Carotid endarterectomy – variation - delay

## Waiting times for patients undergoing surgery for carotid stenosis in Denmark

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### Objective

Carotid stenosis is a known risk factor for stroke. Carotid endarterectomy is a surgical procedure removing the stenosis in selected patients, thereby preventing several recurrent stroke incidents. Carotid endarterectomy should be carried out among patients in need of surgical treatment within a timeframe of 2 weeks from presenting event until operation.

The main purpose of this study was to examine the aspect of time consumption related to the unravelling of patients in need of surgical treatment of carotid stenosis.

### Methods

The study reviews the medical records of all patients undergoing carotid surgery in Denmark in 2007. A systematic literature review in order to identify and evaluate relevant organisational conditions in diagnostics and treatment of patients with carotid stenosis in Denmark is carried out.



### Findings

In Denmark in 2007, patients with carotid stenosis requiring surgery were operated with a median delay of **31** days after first contact and a median delay of **47** days after presenting event.

Well above 90% of patients were operated later than two weeks after presenting event.

Time consumption from region to region varies with a median delay of 20 days to 39 days from first contact with the healthcare system until operation.

The number of operations (CEA) varies regionally from 5.1 to 8.2 patients per 100,000 citizens.

The literature review shows that it is possible to reduce the time consumption from 'first contact with the healthcare system to operation' and from 'presenting event to operation'.

### Conclusions

The effect of carotid endarterectomy achievable in Danish patients with carotid stenosis is most likely reduced in light of the above conclusions. The need for public health initiatives is stressed to reduce time from presenting event to first contact. Possibilities for reorganization to reduce waiting time from first contact with the healthcare system to operation should be considered and discussed among interest groups.